



The First Word

Elkin

First United Methodist Church

May 10, 2018

Vol. XXXIII, No. 9

Bishops Announce Results of Five Constitutional Amendments

Just an update for you on our denomination: There has been much ado about the issue of how the LGBTQ community is received and treated by the United Methodist Church. Since at least 1972, our General Conference has been arguing this point, some things have changed, but not much. Technically our Book of Discipline reads that “homosexuality is considered incompatible with Christian teaching and that sexual relations, while a gift from God, is only affirmed in the covenant of monogamous, heterosexual marriage. (Para. 161G) Further, it states that in Para. 304.3 that self-avowed, practicing homosexuals shall not be considered as candidates for ordination, ordained, or appointed to serve as pastors. In addition, ceremonies celebrating homosexual unions will not be conducted by UMC pastors nor may they be held in any UM Church. (Para. 341.6) Our General Conference has been arguing this for DECADES and CANNOT reach any agreement concerning any change. Therefore our GC 2016 asked the Council of Bishops to appoint a committee to seek a way forward. They have chosen to have a special called session in 2019 to decide what to present to the General Conference.

The Latest: Last year, five amendments to the Constitution of the UMC were presented to the Annual Conferences for ratification. Each Annual Conference, worldwide must vote on the ratification and a 2/3 majority must be voted before the Constitution is changed. Amendments 3, 4 and 5 had to do with the election and appointment of bishops, all passed. Amendments 1 and 2 had to do with language surrounding the above issue. Below is copied from the conference website:

1. The first amendment proposed a new paragraph between current Paragraph 5 and Paragraph 6. This new paragraph would have focused on gender justice.
2. The second amendment proposed changes to the wording in Paragraph 4 in "The Book of Discipline." If it were ratified, the proposed amendment would have added “gender,” “ability,” “age” and “marital status” to the protected membership groups.

These two did not pass, though a majority voted “for,” they did not reach the 2/3 requirement.

As I understand it, the Commission of the Way Forward has offered several plans to the Council of Bishops to be presented to the General Conference. Three have been selected to be presented for vote:

1. Each church/each pastor will decide for themselves if they will allow or perform homosexual unions.
2. While remaining a connectional church, there will be the option of joining certain alliances based on traditional or progressive.
3. Keep things just as they are now.

I cannot predict what will happen in General Conference, but will keep you updated as best as I can. If you have any questions, I will try to answer them or find the answer for you. Please be in prayer for our bishops and delegates as they meet.

Blessings,

Pastor Mike



Confirmands Join Other Youth for Confirm '18

This year's Confirmation Class recently participated in Confirm '18, a weekend youth retreat at Lake Junaluska. Sponsored by the Foundation for Christian Formation in partnership with the Department of Religion of Pfeiffer University, this extraordinary weekend offered interactive workshops focused on the vows of The United Methodist Church. Experiences facilitated exploration and understanding of the sacraments of Baptism and Communion.

One of the highlights of the weekend included each confirmand making a stole that presented words and symbols of their faith journey. Leadership for the weekend was provided by Ed and Kathleen Kilbourne along with Chris and Gloria Hughes.

During the weekend, the traditional Confirmation photo was taken at the Lake Junaluska cross (*pictured at the top of the page*).

Announcements & Reminders

PENTECOST & CONFIRMATION: Join us in celebrating Pentecost on May 20 by wearing something red to church! As we celebrate the birthday of the church, we'll receive this year's Confirmation Class into membership.


THE YOUNG AT HEART will have another gathering on Monday, June 11 at 11:30 am in the Fellowship Hall. We will have sandwiches and a salad bar. Cost is \$5 per person. Everyone is asked to bring their favorite homemade or store bought ice cream to share! Please RSVP to Cindy Furr (336-835-2323, cfurr@elkinfumc.org) by Wednesday, June 6.

ALTAR FLOWERS: Every week, our worship is enhanced by the beauty of the flowers on the altar. These flowers are donated by congregation members and placed on the altar by the altar guild volunteers. Altar flowers are a wonderful way to honor a special occasion (birthdays, anniversaries, graduations, baptisms, holidays, etc.) or remember loved ones and friends who have passed away. Is there someone that you would like to honor? We have a few openings for donations of Altar Flowers. And remember, if you allow the flowers to be distributed to our shut-ins or local retirement communities following the services, you will be bringing joy to many others. Contact Pat Trexler at the church for more info.

GRADUATION SUNDAY—JUNE 3: In preparation for honoring our graduates on Sunday, June 3, we need information on all our graduates. If you or someone in your family (a church member) is graduating from high school or college please contact Ben Wallace (bwallace@elkinfumc.org or 336-835-2323.) We would also like to have two photos of each graduate (first grade and a Senior portrait or recent photo) along with the graduate's name, school, degree, major and plans for the future. Please send info to Ben by Monday, May 21.

TRI-C REQUESTS SALTINE CRACKERS: Thanks to the abundance of Toilet Tissue donated by our church (1,442 rolls in 3 months), Tri-C has enough on hand to last until July. They have asked if we can begin donating Saltine Crackers instead of Toilet Tissue. Please place crackers in the basket in the entryway of the church office.

VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL: Mark your calendar, VBS will be held July 13-15. Our theme this year is to celebrate Project AGAPE, our WNCC UMC mission ministry in Kashatagh region of Armenia. Our kick-off is a pool party and covered dish dinner at the Elkin Park and Pool on Friday evening, a day of art/music/shoe-box packing/wood-working/science on Saturday, and an Armenian breakfast and closing worship on Sunday. Watch for more details!



HAPPY MEMORIAL DAY!

The church office will be closed Monday, May 28, in observance of Memorial Day.

OUR SYMPATHY

We express our sympathy to the following families:

- The Family of Holly Neaves Gambill who passed away on Thursday, May 3. A celebration of her life was held in our Sanctuary on May 6 at 2:00 pm.
- Timothy and Jennifer Martin Brown upon the death of their son-in-law, TC Simpson. A celebration of his life was held at Salem Fork Baptist Church on May 10.

Please keep these families in your thoughts and prayers.

UPCOMING MEETINGS

Vision & Leadership Team
Monday, May 14, 7:00 pm (Library)

Missions Team
Monday, May 21, 7:00 pm (Library)

PRAYER REQUESTS

Church Family: Ann Graham, Sam Tesh, Betty Tesh, Rev. Paul McCauley, Zack Trexler, Paulette McCauley, Libbi Parks, Emad Elkhaiat, Ray Fencil, Larry Johnson, Walt Pettit, Hal Stuart, Bill Amburn, Ercel Carter, Dan & Sallie Park, Laura Gwyn, Gary Conrad, Bonnie Stuart, Loretta Cash, Family of Holly Gambill, Roland Cash, Tim & Jennifer Brown, nursing home residents & homebound

Extended Care: Mary Cockerham, Iris Amburn, Mary Neil, Bliss Vanderpool

Extended Family: Priscilla Smith, Marc Bishop, Lynn & Dale Rose, Buck Freeman, Lorene Newman, Michael Hines, Dennis Staley, Robert Miller, Joan Shuford, Dr. Richard Belcher, Dr. Gladys Campbell, Nan Boyd, Gus Bellia, Lonnie Snider, Teresa Shook, Millie Joyce, Martha Key, Kidd Family, Phyllis Lowe, Deborah S. Smith, Judy Moody, Family of Andra Hankey, Abe Heath, Betsy Robertson's Mother, Andrew Reece, Family of Daniella Suarez, Avery Neaves, Family of Keith Stanley, Connie Partin, Family of TC Simpson, Randy McDaniel, Jeff Wishon, Brian Wilkenson

All of our military personnel and their families

SOLID ROCK CAFÉ

Wednesday, May 16

Menu: Pork Tenderloin, Mashed Potatoes, Veggies
Desserts: Harris, Johnson, Erlandson, Coley, Petrocy

Wednesday, May 23

Menu: Baked Potato Bar
Desserts: Brown, Snider, Combs, Kleinheksel, Aldridge

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 Cindy Furr, Director of Discipleship (cfurr@elkinfumc.org)
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 Benjamin Wallace, Parish Life Coordinator (bwallace@elkinfumc.org)
 Beth Darnell, Director of Weekday Programs (bdarnell@elkinfumc.org)
 Pat Trexler, Custodian (ptrexler@elkinfumc.org)
 George Brown, Assistant Custodian (gbrown@elkinfumc.org)

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